

Indigenous Education

Closing the Gap Summary - Tony Abbott's Report

In 2015, Tony Abbott released the seventh 'Closing the Gap Report' since targets were set by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2008.

Although there has been some improvement in education and health outcomes for Indigenous Australians, in many areas progress appears slow.

Target Progress

Close the life expectancy gap within a generation (by 2031) - Limited progress

From 1998 to 2013, overall Indigenous death rates have declined significantly (by 16 per cent) and there has been a significant decline in the gap (by 15 per cent). However, no significant change was detected between the 2006 baseline and 2013.

Halving the gap in mortality rates for Indigenous children under five by 2018 - Long term progress

The Indigenous child death rate declined by 31 per cent, exceeding the decline in non-Indigenous child deaths between

1998 and 2013. This has led to a significant (35 per cent) narrowing of the gap in child death rates between Indigenous and non-Indigenous children over this timeline.

Ensuring all Indigenous four year olds in remote communities have access to early childhood education within five years - This target has not been met

In order to reach this target, a 95 per cent enrolment for Indigenous four-year-old children in remote communities by 2013 had to be achieved. The target was 95 per cent, rather than 100 per cent enrolment, as early childhood education is not compulsory. In 2013, 85 per cent of Indigenous four-year-olds in remote communities were enrolled.

Close the gap between Indigenous and non Indigenous school attendance within five years - New target

In May 2014, COAG agreed to a new target to close the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous school attendance within five years. There is a strong link between school attendance and student performance. 2014 is the baseline for the new target.

Halve the gap for Indigenous children in reading, writing and numeracy by 2018 - No progress

There has been no improvement on this target based on the results of the NAPLAN tests. Between 2008 and 2014, the

“...there has been some improvement in education and health...”

proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at or above the National Minimum Standards in reading and numeracy has shown no statistically significant improvement nationally in any of the eight measures (Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 in reading and numeracy).

Halve the gap for Indigenous Australians aged 20-24 in Year 12 attainment or equivalent attainment rates by 2020 - On track

This target is on track. Nationally, the proportion of Indigenous 20-24-year-olds who had achieved Year 12 or equivalent increased from 45.4 per cent in 2008 to 58.5 per cent in 2012-13.

Halve the gap in employment outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians by 2018 - No progress

It is clear that since 2008, no progress has been made against this target. The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples aged 15-64 years who are employed fell from 53.8 per cent in 2008 to 47.5 per cent in 2012-13. ■

For more information visit:
<https://www.education.gov.au/>

Progress against the targets

Key findings:

Target	Target year	Progress	Results
Close the gap in life expectancy within a generation	2031	Not on track	Limited progress.
Halve the gap in mortality rates for Indigenous children under five within a decade	2018	On track	Long term progress.
Ensure access for all Indigenous four-year-olds in remote communities to early childhood education	2013	Not met	In 2013, 85 per cent of Indigenous four-year-olds were enrolled compared to the target of 95 per cent.
Close the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous school attendance within five years	2018		New target, baseline 2014.
Halve the gap in reading, writing and numeracy achievements for Indigenous students	2018	Not on track	There has been no overall improvement in Indigenous reading and numeracy since 2008.
Halve the gap for Indigenous Australians aged 20-24 in Year 12 attainment or equivalent attainment rates	2020	On track	The gap is narrowing in Year 12 or equivalent attainment.
Halve the gap in employment outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians	2018	Not on track	There was a decline in employment outcomes since the 2008 baseline.